

OTHER NETWORKS

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The word "media" has become synonymous in modern culture with TV, radio and the press. These are broadcast media or **one-to-many** media. When people want to talk to each other, they will most often use a **one-to-one** media such as the telephone or a letter. The most common form of one-to-one is the **face-to-face** meeting.

A meeting of more than two people can be called a **many-to-many** medium. For most people group discourse can be accomplished only through meetings.

The focus of this issue of **Other Networks** is on many-to-many meeting methods which are NOT face-to-face.

We will look at some ways for groups to converse outside of the constraints that time and location normally place on group communication.

This newsletter is about networks of people. It also deals with a philosophy of human communication and with techniques for group communication - especially when the groups in question are physically distant or for some reason can't work together face-to-face.

This issue of **Other Networks** took two years to create, but it marks an important turning point! For one thing we are now using what has become known as "desktop publishing" to produce the copy. This means that Sally's MacIntosh and a fancy Laserprinter owned by David Speicher of Indianapolis Indiana, are taking the place of the dot matrix printer that produced past issues. **So, thank you Sally and thank you, Dave!**

Also, the last real issue was produced before Sally and I were married! She's kept her name so she is still Sally McCabe. This is our first anniversary issue. Of course cards and letters of congratulations can be sent, and those of you who like giving presents are not to be discouraged (in the form of contributions to the Media Project!) We had what was, for us, a large wedding catered by 60 of our friends who brought wonderful vegetarian dishes.

Those of you who are familiar with **Other Networks** will recognize that there is a lot missing from this issue. The letters section, the "resources" section, and the Small World section have all been lost to age. I want to ask anyone who sent in a Small World ad to please send me a fresh one. After two years, these things tend to become out-dated.

If all goes well, the next issue will be organized in the next few weeks instead of years, so that we can resume the practice of publishing the detailed notes about networks that have been the hallmark of this newsletter. We also have some new correspondants who are helping to write the next issue, and are sending their writing over the wires.

High Tech has taken over in our networking world. But, please, **keep sending information about networks that are of use to you**, high tech is not a reason for one network to be better than another.

-- Stan Pokras

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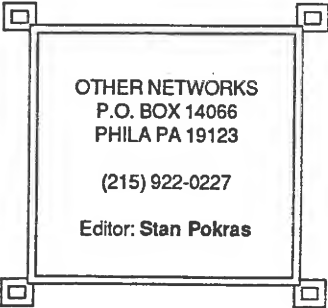
This issue was organized through the use of an Apple II+, a Kaypro II, a MacIntosh 512k and various assorted modems that link them all together.

Artwork by N.G. McClellan

Laser printing by David Speicher

Proofreading by Sally McCabe

This issue is dedicated to David Rodale



NEW AMPHIBIANS

by Laurence J. Victor

THE AWESOME POTENTIAL OF NETWEAVING and The Emergence of Asynchronous Social Educational Systems.

Computer application programs are reaching a "Threshold of Synergy" where they have the potential to catalyze and facilitate the emergence of new levels of human social organization needed for the survival of Humanity.

Aldous Huxley once likened humankind to amphibians, living in two domains. One domain being the domain of primates and mammals, where we live and interact in communities, communicating in real-time, face-to-face, non-verbally and verbally. The other domain is the emergent world of delayed-time or asynchronous communication through our preserved artifacts, including written and recorded language. Over its recorded history, humankind has been exploring the worlds of the speculative, the anticipatory, the alternative and the abstract. We might liken these exploratory ventures to the early trials "on shore" of the first living beings to leave the sea.

Today, we are suddenly at a threshold where we can begin to create stable "colonies" in this new domain. The synergistic development of various technologies, in particular computers and telecommunications, has finally given us the power to liberate ourselves from the constraints of space and time for intimate and/or highly coordinated human organization and interaction. We will not "stay ashore", trapped in our boxes keying to each other over bulletin boards. We are now enabled to transcend this nightmare and see new humane real-time, face-to-face human communication and organization emerging from facilitating asynchronous networks. We can finally become "true" amphibians, living in harmony between these two domains. In analogy, our history to date may be but the birth phase of an emergent Humanity.

The new domain of asynchronous interaction is a much more immediate, real and needed "frontier" for the next wave of human exploration than "outer space" and "space colonies". In a very real sense, the domain of the asynchronous is the domain of the future; which means that our true frontier lies not in "space, but in "time".

PAPER-BASED CONFERENCING

by Stan Pokras

Computers are not the only asynchronous communication tool. Here is a method of paper-based conferencing which has been in use at least since the 1870's.

Towards the later part of the last century, around the time that the telephone was being invented, hobbyists who owned their own printing presses and who had been exchanging printed material with each other through the mail, decided that it would be simpler to mail their work to one central person who would collate it and mail to each contributor a package containing one copy of each contribution.

I first learned of this technique in 1981, when a free-spirited young man named Paul Angel came to Philadelphia to write an article for OTHER NETWORKS. (vol 1 no 3)

AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION

According to Paul's article, the earliest of what I understand to be asynchronous communications became known as the United Amateur Press Association (UAPA) somewhere around 1870.

"By the 1920's" Paul wrote, "this and other "apas" had evolved into forums for conversation. H.P. Lovecraft, the horror-fantasy writer, belonged to an apa in the 20's. When science fiction fandom began in the 1930's, fans who were members of the "mundane" apas spread the idea. SF fans spread the idea so well that South of the Moon (SOTM), the index of apas within science fiction fandom now lists more than 70 apas.

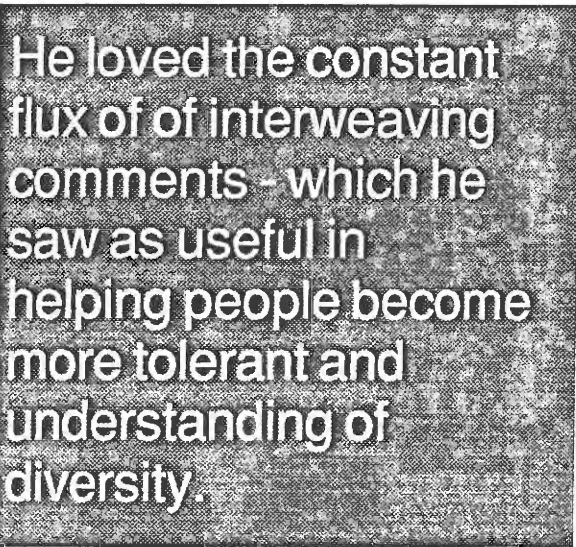
Paul had been active in at least one science fiction apa, and had begun his own, DAPA, in Denver and another apa for his friends interested in Anarchy. (Paul being a political and social anarchist).

Paul's article went on to describe the quality of communications he found most exciting in his apas: diverse topic possibilities, dialectic (which he dubbed "multilectic") and the juxtaposition of many different points of view. He loved the constant flux of of interweaving comments - which he saw as useful in helping people become more tolerant and understanding of diversity.

THE MULTIOLOGUE

Paul coined the term "Multilogue" which he felt better described the process and would be a better generic name for this sort of exchange.

He also described how this form of interaction was being accomplished now, with the use of copy machines instead of printing presses. Access to this new copy machine technology had made it possible for anyone who lives near a copy center to create their own conference by offering to do the monthly photocopy work and mailing for the group.



SOME PROBLEMS WITH CONFERENCING

Issues in conference moderation are very much the same in the paper multilogue form as we understand them to be in computer conferences. People may be timid at first. Some people can't manage the idea of a once-a-month mailing. For some it's too slow, for others it's too often! Some people want to write too much, some don't write at all, making others feel that they are being watched... Observers have been called "lurkers" in computer conferences, but this role has been vindicated.

Only certain people have the patience it takes to interact via typed pages; handwriting may not reproduce well... Here I'm referring to the idea that lead me to introduce this topic in the first place. Even paper conferencing will leave some people out in the cold. Long mailing distances can affect paper conferences by taking two or more months for a letter to come to the U.S. from distant or backward countries. And clear photo copying requires clear originals, some people can't produce an easy to read page. Handicapped people for instance, or people who write in different languages. Even the simple paper-based technology leaves out some people.

MULTIOLOGUES IN FUTURISM

At about the same time that Paul came to Philadelphia, I learned that a woman named Ann Weiser had begun a writing group that she called a "many-to-many" possibly having heard the term while using EIES where Harry Stevens was busily working on his development of Participate, then called "Topics," with Peter and Trudy Johnson-Lenz. Stevens introduced Participate (a computer conferencing program) on The Source in June of 1982.

Ann had met the futurist Robert Theobald at a World Future Society conference in Toronto in 1980 and brought her experience as a member of a science fiction apa to bear on the problem of how to stay in touch with Bob and the other people she had met at the conference. This was the begining of the first of now over a dozen such groups which are flourishing around Bob's work and are associated with his Action Linkage organization.

I was invited to join the second "many-to-many" that Ann started. It's purpose was to act as an exchange among people working on issues in regional and local social transformation. This very same many-to-many is still circulating, having never missed a monthly mailing since it's beginning in March of 1981. Many people have taken turns being the organizing editor of this group. It's had names come and go. At one point I dubbed it the "Link To Love" after a conference topic which was supposed to be a collective book-authoring project on Delphi, where I had my first electronic communication experience. It is now called simply the "General" many-to-many. Some of the people still in this group were among its original inhabitants.

As the idea seemed useful to Theobalds work, he began to talk about the many-to-many's in his speeches and to write about them in his mailings to members of Action Linkage. New topics were

...he began to talk about the many-to-manys in his speeches and to write about them in his mailings...

born such as the discussion on government which was begun by the Lieutenant Governor of Iowa, and the planning and theory group called the "Strategy many-to-many" which Theobald himself leads. The Action Linkage organization recently held its first "Face-to-face" meeting in Arizona.

PAPER-PEOPLE AND COMPUTER-PEOPLE

As a result of this face-to-face, several people in Action Linkage will soon be joining the computer folks on a system called Unison (see the next article. My own paper based many-to-many called the "Action Linkage COMPUTER Multilogue" will be used to help people who are now in the grey area between owning a computer and getting themselves connected to others via a modem to join in the high speed conference world. Many of these people see the step of going on-line as being out of their budgetary reach. Hopefully this will prove less of a barrier in the future than it has been to date.

Other people in the COMPUTER Multilogue do not have a Telenet node (a long-distance computer phone service) in their local calling area. This adds to the cost, and makes their participation on-line less likely.

OTHER USES FOR PAPER-BASED CONFERENCES

The tale continues. Activists working on the issue of Recycling in New Jersey used the multilogue process to strengthen their group's internal relationships and obtain funding for their staff. They've gone on now to work nationally, still using the paper multilogue, even though I have helped some of them to obtain an Apple Computer network grant to run BBS systems.

The Mid-Atlantic Green conference here in Philadelphia, recently lead to the formation of a small multilogue, and another Green group has been rumored to exist in the mid-west. These will probably get together, since we have Ann Weiser to help coordinate these activities.

Many-to-Manys: Updated List...January 1986

Ann Weiser, who created Action Linkage's first many-to-many is now the coordinator of all of the many-to-manys that work with Action Linkage.

She has supplied me with the following list the topics now under discussion.

These discussions are open to the public, and membership in AL is not a prerequisite for participation (it is encouraged). To join any of these, write to Action Linkage and include \$6 to cover postage and photocopy work. State clearly which M-t-M you'd like to join. Also ask Action Linkage for info on itself, while you're at it.

Action Linkage, Box 2240, Wickenburg, AZ 85358.

-- Stan



ARTS AS A COMMUNICATIONS MEDIUM. Still getting started. We expect the first mailing in early January. David O'Fallon, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

COMMUNICATION. Formerly called "New Forms of Communication," this many-to-many is especially for discussion of issues in communications, and for furthering communication within Action Linkage. Stan Pokras, Philadelphia, PA

COMMUNITY-REGIONAL CONTACTS. This many-to-many has been going through an interesting process to find out what its members want to discuss. Topics of high interest include: "What has worked to bring about constructive and peaceful change in communities?" and "The possibilities of re-establishing 'community' as a means of achieving some of our goals." Chuck Adam, Glendale, WI

COMPUTER. An outgrowth of the former "New Forms of Communication" many-to-many, this one centers on computers as a way of connecting people to people. Stan Pokras, Philadelphia, PA

ECONOMICS. General discussion in the area of economics. Topics include optimum vs. maximum economic growth, re-thinking economics to include ecology and a sense of community, etc. Richard T. Borden, Adamsville, RI

GENERAL DISCUSSION. This is our first many-to-many, still operating after almost five years. There is a lot of warmth and supportiveness between members. Recent topics have included education in America, how to de-emphasize competition and encourage cooperation, and various personal experiences and perspectives. This is one of the first many-to-manys to separate the role of discussion leader from the work of handling the money and mailing. Alain Mazet, Limoges FRANCE is the discussion facilitator & Stan Pokras, Philadelphia, PA does the mailing.



You are invited to Join these correspondence groups. Just send \$6 to the address below...

GREEN POLITICS. Two new groups have formed, one for the Mid-Atlantic region and the other for the Mid-West. These may merge in the near future.

HEALTH & HEALING. A very active discussion between people interested in various aspects of personal well-being and medicine. Also one where the job of editor is divided between two people. "Discussion encourager": Ann Weiser. Pages sent to: Stan Pokras, Phila., PA

LIBRARIES AND SOCIAL CHANGE. How Libraries Can Enable Citizens to Find Relevant Information About Fundamental Change. Has been working on compiling a transformational book-list to recommend to libraries. Seeking a new editor. June Scheckter, Moorestown, NJ

INTERNATIONAL. Members are from the U.S., Canada, Norway, Ghana, Australia, India, France, England, and Denmark. Topics have included communication through imagery and The Parable of the Tribes by Schmookler. The group's new project may be to write a "Third World" edition of At the Crossroads. Barry Rafter, San Mateo, CA

MONDRAGON TYPE COMMUNITIES. The discussion and information-gathering in this many-to-many is inspired by but not limited to communities such as the Mondragon cooperative community in Spain. From the editor: "This M2M is trying to develop some visions about what kind of social arrangements might help humankind move up to its next level of development." The plan is to do this through study of past and present communities and the design of new ones. Currently engaged in a discussion aimed at determining common values. Bill Holden, Jr, Cypress, CA

NEW CIVILIZATION. Thought experiments, speculations, and discussion aimed at designing and building a new civilization. Also has a "subcommittee" that is working to plan a model colony. Leon Vickman, Encino, CA

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT. Tom P. Abeles, PhD, Minneapolis, MN

PROCESS EDUCATION. "Process education, as distinct from education based on the transfer of information, is seen as an appropriate holistic vehicle for educational reform as we move further into the Communication Era. The emphasis is on providing mechanisms for students of all ages and in both school and non-school settings to become learners rather than merely learned; to gain wisdom, not merely knowledge. Philip E. Johnson, Tucson, AZ

SPIRITUALITY/RELIGION. The editor sets a topic for comment in each issue. Rev. Asa Sprague, Trinity United Methodist Church, Montpelier, VT

Information about joining can be obtained from:

Action Linkage
Box 2240
Wickenburg, AZ 85358

THE EVOLUTION OF A COMPUTER CONFERENCING SYSTEM

Unison.

A name selected through collective contributions.

The name of the system I first used was RCONS (Remote Console Operated NorthStar), after the name of the software. We were ten users, each paying \$20-\$40 a month for the use of the system. Then we were 15 and then 25, and we were out of room. So in July '83 I started looking for a better machine. And found a used VAX 730 (which came almost a year later).

And we called the system Mile High Mail. Some how, though, I wanted the name of the system to indicate the philosophy behind why I was in this business. I had been using Delphi and The Source heavily. I recognized that there was something happening that was as yet not fully understood. I could see that a "rapport" among people could be established that could not happen as easily in the "analog world."

The term analog world (somewhat equivalent to "face to face" and "real world") in itself refers in part to what I was reaching for. All terms used by the computer naively try to describe an occurrence that is really imaginary, illusionary. Think of the half-hidden snickers when you say, "I met the most interesting person last night on the computer."

Despite the snickers, an entirely new social group is forming. A group that is bounded not by streets and ethnic origins but by intellect and openness. The driving force behind what I wanted to do was to try to reflect this. And we needed a name. To me, the name would eventually be as important as the services, because it would serve as a reminder to us all of what it was we were trying to do.

So we ran a contest here and on The Source (the prize: a t-shirt with the selected name on it.) It was the HOT conference of the week on The Source. When ALEXIA entered the name UNISON, everyone immediately knew that was the image and the name we wanted.

So we had a name. Then what? Unison grew. 50 users for a long time. Then 75. And suddenly almost 500. And we're still signing up users at the rate of one or two a day. Not just users though. Friends. Green-screened companions. Some of the staff I have never met. Some I may never meet.

by Fred Dudden

from his "State of the Unison" address

But we are in Unison. In unison about wanting to provide quality services to our friends. In unison in wanting not to be the biggest service but the most consistent and friendly. In unison in seeing this as the future of communication. In unison about building futures for all of us. Because that is what we are doing.

Unison is not providing electronic mail as such. Nor a place to escape reality. We are providing an electronic community center to gather and share our hopes and our fears and our loves and anguishes. We are building a family with its assorted cousins and old-maid aunts and brothers and sisters.

We are creating a new way to make it easier for us to react to a world that is changing almost faster than we can realize changes have happened. And we are doing it in the way that allows us to do it best--immediately. We are doing it in an arena where intensity rules. Where a day passing is an eternity. Because we are coming to accept that no matter where in the world an event happens, it can affect one or more of us and somehow, we know it almost as it happens.

We are coming to accept that if we can do things in unison, we are all much stronger. That is the concept and the magic. That is what I have seen happen in this medium. And that is why I am here.

August 2, 1985 was the anniversary of the first year of operation as well as the day we installed Parti 4.5. From the vantage point of this anniversary, I see Unison as a tool, one that will be replaced someday by another, better tool. A friend once told me that a toolmaker is doomed to forever seeing the flaws in his tools. That if it were otherwise, he would never strive to build better tools. We are still building the tool called Unison. But already my thoughts turn to the next version. And already anticipation builds at what could be done. But the tool exists. And in Unison the community is using the tool to build the reality of the future.

Author's note: Fred Dudden is the founder of the UNISON networking system based in Denver, Colorado. He is known to many networkers as FTF ("Fred The Fish"), his handle from the early days of electronic bulletin boards and conferencing on the Source. This article first appeared in NETWEAVER, the newsletter of the Electronic Networking Association. It was used by permission of the author.

LOCAL BULLETIN

BOARD SYSTEMS

Stan Pokras

The local BBS's have been a dynamic force in computing since their invention by Ward Christensen and Randy Seuse way back in 1978! The computer clubs, stores and private computerists have enthusiastically supported these systems over the years and their numbers have increased dramatically.

However, more and more systems are now being created for reasons other than to help computerists to interchange programs and chit chat about computers. Since my great interest is in the area of helping people to communicate on a wide range of topics, I recognized a couple of years ago that this form of communications would eventually catch on among people who are only peripherally interested in the computer itself.

Since my wife's work is in the field of urban horticulture, I helped to start the first BBS system devoted to gardening here in Philadelphia and run by the County Extension Service. Called "Garden Works", this system is still happily carrying info on the activities of the extension office and tips on growing vegetables and caring for lawns two and a half years since it first went on-line.

Garden Works was alone as a non-computer oriented computer system two years ago, but, today there are new systems coming along regularly which have interests in other fields. The systems run for science and education are among my favorite. We have a new system called "Scooter's Scientific Exchange," run out of Temple University. Scooter's has a feature in which it carries a scientific paper each month. The operators want the local scientific community to use it as a way of meeting and sharing news. The public nature of a system like this may not be attractive to the "big name" scientists whose ideas are their bread and butter, but I'm sure that the scientific community has lots of people who will benefit from this service.

"High Tech Talk" is run by a program which helps to place teachers in industry for summer work experiences. It has job openings for summer positions for teachers and announcements of grant programs for high schools. The callers are using the system to exchange resources. One teacher is offering a closet full of a certain text book for a chromatograph.

One of the "specialty" high schools, the High School For Science and Engineering runs a BBS called "The Bored of Education!" This is about the liveliest. Here students and teachers are currently involved in an epistemological discussion of "existence" - trying to come to terms with the question "Why are we here?" This may not get humanity any closer to the answer, but it is certainly a departure from the foam and spit that appears on some of the BBS's where kids just swing and play.

Actually, in my experience with youthfull boards, there seems to be a lack of discourse. Kids have a lot less to say to each other than adults, it seems. I guess this makes sense since they have had less time to develop their opinions. (They seem to do a lot of software swapping). Perhaps the structure offered by the Bored of Education has something to do with making a difference. There, the teachers and the students are somewhat "safe" from each other and yet interact with gusto. Of course the teachers are

You can help us to locate more systems for our next issue. Write and tell us about the non-computer BBS's in your area.

working hard to be provocative! And the kids are constrained by the threat of losing their access if they get out of hand, but on the whole I find the interaction there some of the healthiest that has passed before my eyes since I've begun looking at such things as BBS's!

Outside of the field of education, about a year ago a system was created solely to support the interactions of six community information centers which supply their local neighborhood with access to energy programs. These centers help their clients to locate support for their energy bills as well as programs that help save energy by giving them insulation and other home improvement products that stop the loss of heat.

These six organizations have been using the board, called PEN for the "Philadelphia Energy Network" since last July. So far the activity on the system is regular, and most of the people who should use it have gained sufficient expertise that they are comfortable in working in the on-line environment. A group of local energy activists has taken up residency as well and are using the system to communicate with the somewhat more conservative energy information groups. An interesting current debate is now underway in which the potential funding of the system itself by the Electric Company is causing concern over the role of the activists in the system. (The activists and the Electric company are on opposite sides in several energy issues!)

One more system to which few are privy is run here. It has been a joint effort between myself and Ed Yarrish who works with a number of independent computer trainers. Ed used "our" system recently to organize a number of his associates into a team to provide an extensive training program to a large nationwide company. Proposals for lessons were passed as well as assignments for people to learn new software. The whole group needed to meet less than if they had to use face to face meetings and Nan Hanhoe, Ed's closest associate was able to keep the paperwork flowing without using next day mail.

I'll be looking for more uses of local small communication systems. And will appreciate your information and stories on this topic.

COMPARING
HAM RADIO
WITH
COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARDS

An interactive discussion

When I discovered that there are a number of Ham radio people on my computer bulletin board, I decided to try to use the medium of the board itself to interview one of them. Then I realized that a number of people would have insights to add to the conversation. So, the interview became an exchange of messages and the group acted as a panel.

The questions I asked were: "How do you use, Ham radio and computer bulletin boards? What are the differences between the two? Do they have similarities? Are these technologies simply social toys, or do they have useful purposes?"

I first met Sandy when she attended one of my networking workshops. She is a licensed amateur radio operator and she impressed me with her enthusiasm for the hobby. Now she's the proud owner of a new Apple IIc computer and is exploring the local BB systems. Ian, who lives here in Philadelphia while studying for his medical degree, has been active on bulletin boards for several years and a Ham since 1969. Ed has been active with the local computer club for quite a while, and was the person who gave me my first computer bulletin board phone number! Bruce is my brother. Other people dropped in as news of this discussion spread.

-- Stan Pokras

The drawings for this article are by N.G. McClellan



Ed was the first to comment:

MSG LEFT BY: EDMUND RICCHEZZA
DATE POSTED: 1/9/84

While this is not Ham Radio or connected to computer operation, there is a tie-in which I am sure Hams will be interested in. Prior to my activity with computers I was an active short wave (SW) listener and monitored on a regular basis for Radio Prague, Radio Budapest, Radio Australia, Spanish Nat'l Radio, RCI (Canada Int'l), Radio Cairo and RAI (Radio Rome). When computers entered my life, I had to sacrifice my SW activities, and monitored just for RAI.

I received a letter from them asking me if I would be agreeable to submitting my reception reports via telex at their expense. I agreed but suggested a more economical method: submitting my reports via Source. Of course, this required their subscribing to Source (a large computer "utility") and the additional surcharge for accessing thru Telenet (a long-distance phone company which carries computer signals).

Since I logged on to the Source daily and the uploading time would be negligible, I told them there would be no cost from my end. I never heard from them.

But the idea intrigued me and I wrote to Radio Israel and Spanish Nat'l Radio, purposely shunning any Eastern Bloc countries and the biggies such as BBC and Radio Netherland.

The only one interested was Radio Israel. After the necessary arrangements (helping them to subscribe to a computer service called The Source). I started monitoring the frequencies which they had requested. On Sept 13, 1983 I monitored their transmissions on three frequencies. That evening I entered the reports and sent them. When the Engineers reported for work the next morning the reports were awaiting them. They telephoned me at 8:30 A.M. that the reports were received. In one of their broadcast features, they mentioned this COMMUNICATIONS first.

MSG LEFT BY: STAN POKRAS
DATE POSTED: JAN 10 - 3 16 PM

Thanks for opening the panel with your report, Ed. But, you make it sound as though you only did this once. Is that true, or have you continued with it. Also, perhaps you could tell us why the radio stations want these reports?

MSG LEFT BY: IAN CASSELL
DATE POSTED: 1/11/85

How does one compare the two? Well, I entered ham radio at a time in my life when I was an early teen and house bound due to illness. Radio saved my sanity -- it was my communication with the outside world. I think many young hackers use a common knowledge of computers as a means of cementing bonds.

Amateur radio actually has a legal function under US Communications Law. The service is to provide communications assistance in times of disaster -- something it has done a superb job of over the years -- I don't see much application for modeming* (except over radio circuits) in this regard.

Another prime function of amateur radio has been to turn out people capable of technological development of the highest caliber. Many radio/electronic developments were made first by hams (including the first trans-oceanic radio contact). Perhaps the equivalent in computer-land is the software nut who comes up with important stuff in his living room (although this is becoming less frequent and we won't see many more Steve Wozniak's on the hardware end -- it is just too expensive in time and money to compete)..

Another ham function is the promotion of international good will. Through ham radio, I have friends all over the globe (including the eastern bloc) and we know each other as people -- not as Russians or Americans, but as people with common and differing interests. So far, the BBS scene is not too international, but it may become so.

Finally, for the moment, both amateur radio and computer hacking (assuming you are not just a game player) are intellectually stimulating and a good way to avoid the miasma of commercial television (although I have watched many hours of television broadcast by my fellow hams on home-built television transmission equipment).

Some things that the general public may not realize about ham radio -- there have been several satellites designed and built entirely by hams and are operating in space as radio transponders, there was a ham-astronaut who used his radio on a space-shuttle mission, we can bounce radio signals off meteors, aurora, and the moon. More later!
=Ian - WA1KMR=

MSG LEFT BY: BRUCE POKRAS
DATE POSTED: 1/11/85

What has not been mentioned so far is that both media provide a mode of interaction between people who otherwise would never have been in contact. This discussion is a prime example of this. Only, in BBS communication, I have to know how to spell!!!!

However, the kinds of discussions, and the variety of people one can meet are similar (that is, between ham and modeming). The major difference is the lack of instant interaction. However, this lack is more than made up for by the thought that goes into our finished communications. Rite?..I mean Write?..I mean RIGHTT????

By the way, I was formally a ham myself (WA3RUN).

MSG LEFT BY: EDMUND RICCHEZZA
DATE POSTED: 1/12/85

STAN: Re submitting my reception reports via EMail on The Source. I continued the practice for a year, monitoring different frequencies as advised by Radio Israel until I cancelled with The Source. I plan on continuing via DELPHI. Most of the Int'l Stations solicit reception reports from listeners. Reports are based on an agreed upon Code covering the following: Signal Strength, Interference and Overall Merit - referred to as SIO. The broadcasting stations, on the basis of these reports, determine which frequencies are best for a particular target area. The listener is rewarded with a picture post card termed a QSL. This usually depicts a picturesque scene from the country involved



and are much sought after by the listener.

I enjoy hearing the different announcements: "Good evening everybody. This is Moscow." "From latitude zero this is HCJB, Quito, Ecuador" (Quito is on the equator); "Good morning, good afternoon, good evening - wherever you are. This is Radio Netherland" (the Netherlands). Radio Portugal used to sign on with strains of Beethoven's Fifth and "L'Occidente vin'cera" (The West will win"). Radio Australia started off with the kookaburra bird's laughing call; Vatican Radio: "Laudeter Jesus Christus"; Radio Rome: bird chirping and bells ringing (composition by Parelli); Radio Israel: "This is Kol Israel broadcasting from Jerusalem"; Peking: first a man's voice: "This is Peking" followed by a woman's voice: "This is Peking" - I could go on, and on.

MSG LEFT BY: SANDY KERNOSH
DATE POSTED: 1/12/85

First of all I would like to tell Ian, Ed, and Bruce that I enjoyed reading their comments and agree that there are similarities between communicating between computers and communicating via amateur radio. I agree with Ian that with the radio you can talk to people all around the world. Amateur radio has been a wonderful experience for me for the past 11 years. Many people on the radio are also interested in computers.

There are various forms of communication on radio from "talking" to slow and fast scan TV which transmits images and RTTY which is similar to what we are doing on BBS except that the other person types back responses immediately. RTTY involves interfacing a computer or teletype machine to one's radio transmitter and receiver.

In order to become a Ham it is necessary to take a FCC EXAM that includes MORSE Code and electronic theory. Based on level of exam passed, one's privileges are increased--ie. allowed to use some or all frequencies.

There are ham radio classes in the area if people are interested. Hams provide emergency communication in time of disasters (as Ian mentioned) and allow you to make friends with people all over the world. Interestingly enough foreign amateurs speak enough English to hold nice QSO (conversation) which is more than I can do in any other language.

It is possible to get into radio for not too much money by buying used equipment. Some people build their own, although this is not as common today as it was years ago due to sophisticated solid state equipment used these days. There are special interest groups and nets for special interest groups. ie Marco for Medical amateurs, Chavarim for Jewish amateurs, etc.

Ed mentioned QSL cards. It is customary to send a card with your call date and time of QSO when you talk to another ham especially one in a foreign country or after an especially nice QSO. In fact people collect them from all states or all countries. I would be glad to try and answer questions. I think computers and Amateur Radio are two wonderful and related hobbies.

MSG LEFT BY: SANDY KERNOSH
DATE POSTED: 1/12/85
I was so busy trying to tell you the wonders of Amateur Radio that I forgot to tell anyone one interested that my call is KF3D. Please forgive the mistakes --I am a "novice" when it comes to computers and BBS. Question for Bruce why are you formerly WA3RUN --is it too late to renew license? There is a pretty long grace period.

73 KF3D

MSG LEFT BY: STAN POKRAS
DATE POSTED: JAN 14 85
Speaking about making contacts with foreigners, this weekend a group of people around the country spent 5 hours on the Delphi computer conferencing system in an unusual live "chat" with some people in Germany. These are folks in the German Green Party who are interested in exchanging news services with people here in the states.

I want to thank all of you for entering your comments on bulletin boards and ham radio, perhaps you could answer another question.

Do you feel less "connected" using a BBS than you do when using your radio? The delay between the time you post a message on a BBS and any reply you might get would seem to create a feeling of "speaking to yourself." Or does it feel more like correspondence?

MSG LEFT BY: BRUCE POKRAS
DATE POSTED: JAN 14
Sandy, my license expired in 1977. Two years previously I had sold my rig, so when renewal time came around I didn't have the requisite air time. Being an honest person, I wasn't going to make out a false log, even though I doubt that it would ever have been checked.

Stan, there is something to the personal contact that voice contact provides. However, a BBS provides access for many

more people to receive a given message verbatim from my keyboard. We can discuss ideas over long periods of time with the luxury of well thought out replies. So each media has its good points. Ham lets you reach exotic places, while BBS gives you the chance to reach further into people's minds.

MSG LEFT BY: SANDY KERNOSH
DATE POSTED: 1/15/85
I think Bruce made good points about the comparison of "instant" communication via Amateur radio vs communication via BBS. I think Bruce, sometimes on the radio you can also "reach far into people's minds"--depending on the people involved. I find BBS communication very satisfying and informative. Since there is no FCC exam required to communicate via computers it is available to more people. As far as an instant reply--it is not always possible to find the specific party to whom you wish to speak on the radio, whereas on BBS you can post a public message or send a personal note any time.

Bruce do you miss having your "ticket?" [amateur license]

MSG LEFT BY: BRUCE POKRAS
DATE POSTED: JAN 18
Sandy, yes, I do miss QSOing, and would like to get back to it someday. Right now I don't have time for another hobby (I work full time and go to law school at night), but after I graduate I'd like to get my license again.

MSG LEFT BY: AVRAM SCHACHTER
DATE POSTED: 01/20/85
I was very happy to hear from Stan that he was interested in starting a Ham/BBS section here. I feel that the connection between the two hobbies is very strong and that this is a good forum to explore the similarities and differences between the two.

The points about the intimacy vs. exoticness that Sandy made were very accurate in that it is possible to get to know people very



well with both methods of communication and -with Ham Radio- in far and exotic places too.

I have been licensed for six years now....the last five as a Technician with plans to upgrade to General soon. I am presently an Electrical Eng Tech major at Temple University and fill up my spare time (what little I have!) with Hamming, computing, and a youth organization for which I am the director.

I think that it would be interesting if we -the licensed Hams- would provide a list of various modes of communications like CW, SSB, RTTY, SSTV, OSCAR, EME, and the like along with a description of each and the types of gear required so as to give the as-yet-unlicensed readers of this section an idea of what Hamming is all about.

73, Avram (Abe), N3BBF

MSG LEFT BY: IAN CASSELL
DATE POSTED: 1/27/85
I have my amateur radio callsign on my car's license tags. When I first moved to Mexico, I stayed in a hotel for a while before I found my own place to live. One morning I woke up and found a note under my windshield wiper blade from a ham who was staying in the same hotel -- inviting me to join him for breakfast! It turns out that he spends half of his year there (he is retired) and showed me around the city a bit! So, hamming is not just radio!

=I= WA1KMR

MSG LEFT BY: STAN POKRAS
DATE POSTED: JAN 29
I have read that there are ham operated radio bulletin board systems. these are radios with computer systems attached that provide BBS services to callers using ham radios to transmit their computers signal rather than telephones. Do any of you have any experience with these systems? <<STAN>>

MSG LEFT BY: IAN CASSELL
DATE POSTED: 1/30/85
Indeed, Stan, there are ham BBS! This is called packet radio and, basically, works similar to the BBS that we all know and love(?). It is just done over the air rather than over the telephone. In fact, there is a packet station on one of the amateur satellites and we can upload a message that can be downloaded by a ham colleague on the other side of the globe as the satellite passes over his QTH (ham talk for location). A ham satellite uplink/downlink station is no longer particularly complicated nor expensive.

73. =Ian=

MSG LEFT BY: STAN POKRAS
DATE POSTED: JAN 30
Thanks Ian, for more on radio BBS's. The next step would seem to be to try to find someone who has a radio rig and computer, and actually uses one of these to exchange with other hams. Have any of you met someone who has this equipment? <<STAN>>

MSG LEFT BY: PAUL ROTHMAN
DATE POSTED: 2/11/85
I am Paul, K3RBO, and I am a relative newcomer to this board. Ham radio has been a way of life for me for 22 years, ever since my dad took me to Field Day with Philmont Mobile Radio Club. (I was 10) Ham radio has always been a fraternity, whose members respect their fellows brothers as having the skills necessary to get their license, build and operate radio equipment, etc. This brotherhood extends around the world. I have had numerous pleasant experiences with encounters with hams, and have made many friends.

In regard to the similarity to BBS operation, it can be said that computer hackers are somewhat fraternal, as they share a common interest and skills. I think the differences are that this mode is so new, that there has not been an established code of ethics, a creed, if you will.

In other words, as others have stated, hams have a common purpose - to provide communications if it is required. There is very little common purpose among computer enthusiasts. Some are into games, some programming, etc. The diversity of equipment and languages makes this hobby sort of like a modern "Tower of Babel".

So, those are my thoughts. I think both hobbies are great in their own ways, as they stimulate the mind and create relationships.

73, Paul K3RBO

MSG LEFT BY: STAN POKRAS
DATE POSTED: FEB 12
I want to thank all of you who have taken time to respond to my questions about the relationship of amateur radio to BBS systems. I have the feeling that we've heard from all who are likely to have something to say, so I'll wind down this discussion. This discussion will be published in the next issue of Other Networks.

If you have more to add, please do. There is still time. If you have any regrets about something you said, tell me and I'll make the correction. If you object to having your name in the newsletter (it goes all over the country) let me know that too and I'll give you a substitute handle.

Again, thanks for your input.

73, Stan



*Note:
Modeming is computer talk for connecting a computer to a telephone or to a radio transmitter. A "modem" is the device which changes computer pulses into sound and then back again. The sounds then are used to convey the computer data over the phone lines.

The MEDIA PROJECT'S Grant from Apple

Two years ago, in the previous Other Networks, we told you about our application to Apple Computer company for a computer bulletin board system. So, for those of you who follow this column, I want to happily announce that the grant from Apple Computer came through in August of 1984. The Media Project and three New Jersey environmental groups all received Apple II+ computers to run local bulletin board systems (BBS's) on environmental issues.

I have been running ours (which is called The Apple to Eden, due to its connection with the environment, the Garden State and the computer company) since November 1984. In order to gain an audience I posted notices on a few other local BBS's and sure enough, people started to show up. Since the material that I put on the system indicates a strong interest in environmental issues, the computerists in the area who are concerned with social issues in general have taken up residence. The system has now developed a core group of about two dozen regular users, and an overall membership of about 100 people.

The discussions have been stimulating at times. Issues like the environmental disaster in Bhopal India, and our own Philadelphia disaster known as the MOVE confrontation were hot items while they were in the news. The four pages of discussion with the "hams" that appears in this issue was all written on the Apple to Eden bulletin board.

In January of this year, 1986 an additional grant of a hard disk drive, a Sider , from First Class Peripherals was added to the system making it possible to add numerous new sections for discussion.

Since my local involvement with non-profit groups and computers has been growing, and since a group of non-profit computer consultants has begun to organize here in Philadelphia, the system now also houses a forum on issues relating to non-profit groups' use of computers. And most recently, a group of Quakers (the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting) who are investigating the possibility of setting up their own system , have been using ours as a means of experimentation with this new medium.

I feel strongly that individually owned conferencing systems will be the "sleepers" social innovation of the last quarter of the 20th century. These are and will continue to be local personal, literary, political, social and cultural exchanges. They often are available to the public for free and offer a safe way to meet new friends, friends who can come over to visit from time to time. In fact I had an open house "brunch" for the gang on the bulletin board. Only one woman was in the group of about 15, but all were delighted to meet and mingle with the people who had previously just been words on a screen.

As these systems become more prevalent (there are now over 3000 of them in the U.S.) they will move away from the current focus that most of them have on computers. People are now using the computer to talk about the computer. But like the earlier part of this century when people finally got tired of talking about the telephone, the computer as the main topic on computer conferencing systems will only last for a while. Too many other topics exist!

A major editorial thrust here in OTHER NETWORKS will be to bring you news about the computer as a tool for discussion of all topics. We'll especially be looking for uses that promote the ability of people to direct the outcome of their own activities and promote the welfare of their community.

<<STAN>>

The people and groups in this issue:

New Amphibians - Laurence J. Victor - 832 E. Adams, Tucson AZ 85719
or you can reach him via modem at: (602)884-6552 use NUCALLER,
NUCALLER for name and password.

Paper-based Conferencing - Action Linkage - PO Box 2240 Wickenburg
AZ 85358

The Evolution of a Computer Conferencing System - Unison and its
owner, Fred Dudden, may be reached at 303-329-3113 (that's a voice number).

Local Bulletin Board Systems - Apple to Eden 215-829-0334 (300 baud)

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